

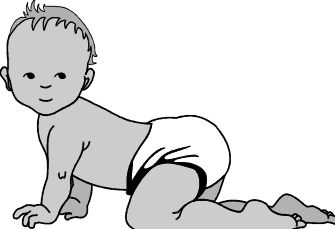
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* Barriers to Health Care Services

The Wonders of a Child - From Birth to Three

By Shanna Wheeler

"I wonder when he'll sleep through the night?" "I wonder when she's supposed to talk?" "He's nine months old, I wonder why he's not sitting up?" "I wonder what children this age are supposed to be doing?"



Your child grows and develops very fast in his/her first three years of life. Ask questions about your baby. The answers may help improve the quality of your infant or child's life.

If you have questions **BABY WATCH** can help! Baby Watch staff can check your baby in your home or at a clinic near you. And, there is no cost to you. Baby Watch checks how your child:

- ✓ learns
- ✓ sits or walks
- ✓ talks, understands
- ✓ feeds, dresses, or toilets by him/herself
- ✓ grows or is sick
- ✓ gets along with other children
- ✓ hears
- ✓ sees

Most kids grow and develop just fine. But, sometimes a child is slower than others in some area. Baby Watch provides many services to help your child. **Baby Watch** Services might be:

- ✓ physical and speech therapy,
- ✓ family support and care coordination.

Get the right information. You will enjoy your baby more. And, you will help your baby be as healthy and happy as can be.

Call the **Baby Watch** program at 1-800-961-4226 for the local number in your area.

How To Get Health Care Services: Barriers You Might Not Know About

By Andrea Hight

Have you ever had a hard time getting to see a dentist? Maybe you called a lot of dental offices to find one who will see you or your kids. Or, do you ever feel like the staff in the doctor's office don't want to see you because you have Medicaid?

Read on if you have a hard time making

appointments. Or, if you don't like the way healthcare workers treat you.

We want you to understand what happens to make experiences good or bad, not just for you; but for your doctors too.

You know you are a nice person. And, you know most people who have Medicaid are nice people. Why don't the staff in a doctor or dentist's office know it? It takes just a few of your fellow consumers who misuse their benefits to sabotage you and everybody else on Medicaid! That's right, sabotage! Doctors, dentists and their staff don't forget a person who behaves badly in the office.

Here's an example: Just think of the thousands of meals you've had in your life. You can't remember them all. But, you do remember the few really bad meals or the **one** that made you sick.

Here are some of the ways you can be hurt by the few irresponsible Medicaid consumers. And, here are some tips to help you make a difference.

Always keep your appointment. If you must cancel, call the day before to cancel or reschedule.

- ◆ 1/3 or 33% of all Medicaid patients miss appointments,
 - ◆ 8% of patients with private insurance miss appointments,
- And, do not call to cancel!



Why is it a problem?

- ◆ It can cost \$300/hour to run a dental clinic. The dentist stills pays for staff and equipment when someone "no shows."
- ◆ "No shows" upset staff by wasting time.
- ◆ The dentist and office staff have to work much harder to pay the bills.

And, someone - like you or your kids - who needs an appointment, misses out.

Be on time!

Don't be late! Take an earlier appointment if you have to wait a while. appointment is part of a plan to When you are late:



but even Your treat you.

- ◆ The doctor or dentist may not have time to finish taking care of you.
- ◆ Or, if he does finish your treatment it cuts into someone else's time.
- ◆ The next patient has to wait.

- ◆ Or, you may have to come back without any care.

Can you remember when you waited a long time to see the doctor or dentist? Maybe it's because somebody else was late.

Be Polite. Say “please” and “thank you”.

Healthcare workers have a lot of stress taking care of all their patients. Emergencies happen. Mistakes happen. Staff don't mean to make mistakes or inconvenience you.

- ◆ Be kind. Be understanding. You'll be more likely to get help with your problems.
- ◆ Write a 'thank you' note to show you care.

Some problems just don't have answers.

Be reasonable. Here's an example: What if the doctor can't see you when you show up for your visit? Maybe he's sick, or taking care of an emergency.

What do you do? Do you insist someone see you anyhow? It might just not be possible.

Remember...doctors and dentists are people too. Things just happen no matter what.

Never yell or swear!

You might be upset for a good reason. Don't make it worse and upset everyone else - staff and other patients. Office staff don't have to deal with people who are rude.

Stay calm. Be polite, even in a bad situation.

Alcohol: Never drink before your appointment. Never show up drunk.

Makes good sense to most of you. But, doctors usually can't treat you if you have been drinking. And, no one wants you in the waiting room!

Taking your children to an appointment.

Get your children ready for the visit. They need to have time to wash and put on clean clothes.

- ◆ Your kids feel better when they feel good about how they look,
- ◆ It makes others in the waiting room more comfortable,
- ◆ You show the clinic staff that the visit is important to you and your family.



Teach your children respect.

You teach kids how to respect the property and the privacy of others when you show respect.

Don't let your kids:

- ◆ climb on the furniture,
- ◆ touch things that might break or hurt them,
- ◆ Or, run all over the place.

Bring along a book or toy to keep them busy while they sit and wait. You'll be more relaxed.

Don't bring Food or Drink.

Eat outside! It is unsanitary to bring food or drinks into the waiting room. Besides, it makes a mess!

Listen to the Doctor. Do what he/she tells you.

- ◆ Take his/her advice. You won't get the best health care if you don't listen.
- ◆ Do what the doctor or dentist says to do. Ask questions so you'll know what to do.

Here's an example: the dentist says don't smoke after he pulls your tooth. If you smoke, you will get a dry socket where the tooth used to be. And, that really, really hurts. So, listen.



You are a partner in your family's good health and your own.

Show the doctor and the dentist you and your family are great patients.

- ◆ Show them that Medicaid consumers are great patients.
- ◆ Show them that most Medicaid consumers know how to act.

Don't let anyone take away your chances for good health care.

Your rights to medical care: As a **Medicaid** consumer, you have the right to get medical care regardless of your race, color, nationality, disability, age, sex or religion. If you feel you have been treated unfairly or discriminated against for any reason, call your HMO. Ask to speak with the Civil Rights coordinator. If you are not enrolled with an HMO, call Health Care Financing at 1-877-291-5583.

Send comments or suggestions to:

Randa Pickle

P.O. Box 143107

Salt Lake City, Ut 84114-3107

Call 538-6417, or toll free 1-877-291-5583

E-mail rpickle@doh.state.us.